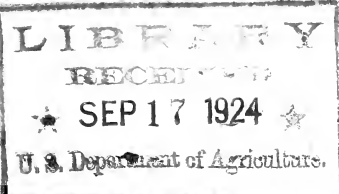


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# Garden Notes

Number Seventeen

## Importing Irises

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The great interest now manifested in Irises, which I believe is largely due to the activities of The American Iris Society, has caused many Iris lovers to wonder if it would pay them to *take a chance* and import Irises direct from Europe, and I am issuing this number of my Garden Notes to answer the many inquiries I am receiving for information and advice on this subject. Naturally, the first step for an importation order is obtaining price lists and catalogs so that a selection of varieties can be made, and for the guidance of the novice importer, I am listing the firms from whom I have imported Irises during the past several years. I can vividly recall my first importations, when upon the recommendations of Mr. J. C. Wister, now President of The American Iris Society, and who was then with the American Army in France, I started importing Ambassadeur and Souvenir de Madame Gaudichau, which he told me were the two best Irises he had ever seen. Here is the list of foreign growers with complete addresses:

Cayeux and Le Clere, 8 Quai de la Megisserie, Paris, France	Perry's Hardy Plant Farms, Enfield, Middlesex, Eng- land
Ch. Maron and Son, Brunoy, (Seine-&-Oise), France	R. Wallace & Company, The Old Gardens, Tunbridge Wells, England
Millet et Fils, Bourg-la-Reine, (Seine), France	Vilmorin, Andrieux and Company, 4 Quai de la Megisserie, Paris, France
The Orpington Nurseries Co., Orpington, Kent, England	

After obtaining the necessary lists and making your selection of varieties, you should write The Federal Horticultural Board, Washington, D. C., and ask them for their form No. 207, "Application for Permit to Import," for due to the regulations of Quarantine No. 37, it is necessary to obtain Federal authority to import Irises from foreign growers. You will list the order you have selected on this form and submit it to the Horticultural Board, and you will then be advised in due time, the varieties and number of each you are authorized to import, and I wish to state here that the decision of the Board is final, for even an extended correspondence will not add a single variety which has been omitted from your permit. I recall one instance where a firm included in my shipment, through error, one hundred rhizomes of *Isoline*, which were not listed on the permit, and these roots were taken from the shipment at Washington and returned to France, even though I tried to have the Horticultural Board see the advisability of allowing me to keep them after they had arrived in this country. In advising you what varieties you can import, the Board will send you a pink sheet listing the varieties and the number of each to be imported, and this sheet will carry your Importation Permit Number. You will also be supplied with shipping tags bearing this same number, which must be sent to your Foreign Grower, for he is required to send the shipment direct to the Federal Horticultural Board at Washington for inspection before the plants can be sent to your garden. These tags, with the number, guide and identify the shipment through this inspection period. It is always best, in my opinion, to mark your garden numbers or locations after each variety listed on the pink sheet I have referred to, and file it carefully away, for you will find it a very handy, ready reference when the Federal Inspector makes his annual visit during the time you are required to grow the plants under Federal control. For a period of two years you must grow the Irises in your own garden without resale, although the increase may be disposed of. This seeming bit of "red tape" sounds more severe than it really is, for I have always found the personnel of the Department at Washington, and that of the Inspectors who yearly check up my stock, to be composed of men who measure up to the standard of gentlemen in every way, and

they seem anxious to give the gardener every fair consideration. So this need not deter you from making a start and *taking a chance* at importing.

I have this suggestion to make, however. Importation orders should be placed as early as possible, as the plants require time to establish themselves after their long journey, and the wet, cold autumn weather we experience in this locality is not at all conducive to healthy growth. It most frequently means stunted, dormant plants, and sometimes even rot and failure. I can recall some importations where over seventy-five percent of the total number of plants imported did not live.

Then, too, in my locality I have much more trouble with some varieties originated by Hort, Denis and Perry, than I do with those originated by Dykes, Vilmorin, Yeld, Millet, Cayeux and Bliss. Of course I realize that these first three named originators are working with the Ricardi strain, which cannot stand our cold winter rains, but I believe that these difficult varieties can be made to grow successfully in California, and I hope that my friends out there will continue to import, propagate, and distribute them in western gardens. I will look forward to most interesting visits to the coast, to study the varieties that I have had such difficulty, or have entirely failed in growing, and in the interim between visits I will, in the winter, place the varieties which may still be alive in cold frames and give them special care to see what results I can secure in my own garden. To guide the new importer I give here a partial list of the species, crosses, and varieties which have proven very obstinate in acclimating themselves in my garden, in the hope that my experience may be of some service to him. Some of the varieties I have imported four, five, yes and even a half dozen times with the same disastrous results.

ALATA  
ALBICANS VRAI  
AMBROSE WISEMAN  
ARIADNE  
AVRIL  
BALKANA  
BELLADONNA  
BENRIMO  
BERTRAND  
BLACK PRINCE  
BLANC DE CACHEMIRE

BOISSIERI  
BOSNIAMAC  
BRACTEATA  
BUCHARICA  
BULLEYANA  
CALIFORNICA  
CASSANDRA  
CAUCASIAN  
CHRYSOGRAPHE  
CLARKEI  
COMPACTA



CHRISTATA	MESTOR
CHRISTATA ALBA	MILESI
CUPREA	MIRIAM
CYPRIANA MAGNIFICA	MISS BROUGHTON
DAINTY	MISS JESSOP
DANFORDIAE	MISSOURIENSIS
DELAVAYI	MLLE. JEANNE BEL
DOLORES	M. ALPHONSE GERARD
DOUGLASIANA	M. MASSE
EDITH CAVELL	MONSPUR
EDIN PHILPOTTS	MONSPUR—A. J. BALFOUR
EDNA PERRY	MRS. FRED STERN
FIMBRIATA	MRS. G. HILL
FLORA RIDLER	MRS. M. BEVAN
FOETIDISSIMA	NEFERT
FORRESTI	NEGUS
FULVA	NEPALENSIS
GATESI	NIMEVOA
GERNEZ	OCHRA-AUREA
GLORIAE	OCTAVIA
HARTWEGI	ORCHIOIDES
HENRI DENIS	ORIENTALIS CANARI
HENRI GLOWER	ORIENTALIS SANGUINEA
HERALD	PARADOXA
HEXAGONA LAMANCEI	PARVAR
HOOKERI	PEGASSUS
HUNGARICA	PEGGY PERRY
IBERICA	PERRY'S BLUE
IB-MACRANTHA	PURDYI
IDEAL	RENE DENIS
ISTRIA	RICARDI
JAPONICA	RICARDI BLANC BLEUTE
JENKINSII	RICARDI FONCE
JOICE RESBURY	ROBIN
JULIETTE WALLET	RÖSENBACHIANA
JUNONIA	RUTHENICA
JUSSIEU	SAMITE
KASHMERIANA — MISS WIL-	SEMELE
MOTT	SHELFORD GIANT
LADY NORTHCLIFFE	SHYLOCK
LAEVIGATA ALBA	SIBERIAN BLUE
LAEVIGATA ALBA PURPUREA	SIBIRICA
LAEVIGATA FOL. VAR.	SIBIRICA ALBA
LAZICA	SIBIRICA ALBA GRANDI-
LE BOUVET	FLORA
LONGIPETALA	SIBIRICA BAXTERI
LYNETTE	SIBIRICA GEORGE WALLACE
MADAME ALPHONSE GERARD	SIBIRICA LADY GODIVA
MADAME CLAUDE MONET	SIBIRICA MAXIMA
MADAME MASSE	SIBIRICA ORIENTALIS
MADAME TYNARE	SINDJARENSIS
MAJESTIC	SINDPERS
MARCUS	SINDPUR
MARGUERITE MARON	SIR DIGHTON PROBYN
MERCUTIO	SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE

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SOUV. DE LOETITIA MICHAUD	TINGITANA
SPEEDWELL	TOLMEIANA
SPURIA CIEL BLEU	TUSCANY
STYLOSA	TWILIGHT
STYLOSA ALBA	VANESSA
SUSHAN	VERNA
SUSIANA	VULCAN
TELEMON	WATSONIANA
TENAX	WILSONI

Another thing my experience has taught me, is that the Siberians and other beardless varieties are very, very, very hard to import. I have tried early shipments, I have tried mid-season shipments and I have tried late shipments with the same general results. I would say that over ninety percent of all my importations of this type of Irises have died for me. It certainly is a *take a chance* proposition, with the beardless sorts, but still I intend to keep on trying, for now and then a real good thing acclimates itself successfully for me.

Now for your most direct questions. "Will it pay me to import Irises?" "Would you advise me to *take a chance* and import?" In the first place I must say it depends absolutely on *your* temperament. If you like to *take a chance* and accomplish the difficult thing, if a heavy loss in a shipment will not bring regret but only add fervor to your zeal to try again, then importing will appeal to you and furnish zest for your garden plans. But if you wish to carry on your garden activities with the greatest possible degree of safety and peace of mind, I would advise you to buy your stock of American growers who have plants already acclimated, and during the first year you will probably have healthier Irises, with much more increase than you will secure from plants in an imported shipment, and of course you will be free to sell the entire stock if you choose. On a successful imported shipment you will usually save money, as the foreign growers' prices are as a rule cheaper than the American growers, but if you consider the losses to be taken up, the importation duty of thirty percent to be added, the transportation charges with necessary insurance, I believe you will find that the American Growers' prices are not so much out of line.

I like the importing game and I intend to keep at it, for I am personally acquainted with all the foreign growers, and it is indeed a pleasure to keep in touch with the progress they are making and then, too, I like the thrill, the chance of it all. Often a heavy loss has called upon every ounce of sporting blood that I could muster to "carry on" and try again, but the break is not always bad, and I often succeed with a variety on the third or fourth importations which had proven a failure the first and second times, and the thrill of accomplishment makes the effort well worth while.

Many of the very new varieties (most of them placed upon the market for the first time last year) like Bertrand, Majestic, Marguerite Maron, Mlle. Jeanne Bel, Souvenir de Loetitia Michaud, Twilight, and twenty-three others which I imported last year and which failed to grow, I will again import this year in the hope that I may have greater success next time.

*"In my school days, when I had lost one shaft,  
I shot his fellow on the self same flight,  
The self same way, with more advised watch,  
To find the other forth; and by adventuring both,  
I oft found both."*

It is quite probable that some of my readers will decide to try an Import Order, and I will be interested in hearing results. If I can be of any further service, do not hesitate to write me, for I will be glad to give you all the assistance I can. It is my aim to help you in getting as much fun and joy out of the Iris section of your garden as I am getting out of mine.

So here's success to you, and may your importation order be successful and bring a keener delight to the great pleasure of having a garden.

Van Wert, Ohio, August 20, 1924.

